Management of Pension and Provident Fund

2619. SHRI S. RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the pension and provident funds of Central Government employees will be privately managed from the next fiscal year and the Centre hopes to cap the fiscal deficit to 5 per cent as a result of this;

(b) whether it is also a fact that accruals to these funds would be allowed to build up a broad portfolio including high risk-return assets like equity and private debt instruments; and

(c) if so, what are Government's final plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) to (c) The matter is under consideration.

Cadre restructuring proposals in Central Excise and Customs

2620. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Ministry of Personnel and Training, had already cleared the cadre restructuring proposal for the Central Excise and Customs, in the month of October, 2000;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Finance Minister had given approval for the Cadre Restructuring plan for this service, in the month of September 2000;

(c) at what stage and in which department of Government, this proposal is pending at present; and

(d) what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) to (d) The proposal for restructuring of cadres of Customs and Central Excise Department is presently under active consideration of the Governments.

MoU with Assam on downsizing administration

2621. SHRIMATI BASANTI SARMA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Assam has already signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Government;